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Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Report of the President of the Council on consultations held with the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

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I. Introduction

1. At its substantive session of 2003, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2003/51 of 24 July 2003 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations.

2. In paragraph 17 of its resolution 58/104 of 9 December 2003, the General Assembly requested the Council to continue to consider, in consultation with the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, appropriate measures for coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system in implementing the relevant resolutions of the Assembly.

3. Information submitted by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations on their activities in relation to Non-Self-Governing Territories is set out below.

II. Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

4. According to the information provided by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations, during the period under review, a number of specialized agencies and organizations have continued to provide assistance to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories in response to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Special Committee. A number of organizations have extended or formulated such programmes of assistance from within their own budgetary resources, in addition to their respective contributions as executing agencies of projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the primary provider of assistance.

5. A number of assistance projects have continued to be funded by UNDP, in close collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

A. Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

6. With respect to the activities of ECLAC related to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, such activities are mainly, though not exclusively, executed by the Subregional Headquarters of ECLAC for the Caribbean, within the framework of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC). The CDCC was established in 1975 as a permanent subsidiary body of ECLAC, for cooperation in the adoption of concrete measures aimed at the development of the member countries of the Committee and for the promotion of initiatives to strengthen cooperation among them.

7. Of the 23 members of the CDCC, 4 of the Territories mentioned in your letter under reference enjoy the status of associate member. These are Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, and the United States Virgin Islands. These countries participate fully in the activities of the Committee and, over the years, have recorded a satisfactory degree of attendance at meetings. Worthy of mention in this context, is the fact that the 20th session of the CDCC will convene in the United States Virgin Islands, on 22 and 23 April 2004, at the invitation of the authorities of that Territory. This, in fact, would be the second occasion on which this particular associate member will have hosted a meeting of the CDCC. Other associate members have done likewise.

8. I should also draw to your attention the fact that the membership of the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands is being actively pursued by ECLAC. ECLAC remains very supportive of the aspirations of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and, in essence, the degree to which advantage is taken of the facilities that are offered is determined by the extent of the interest of the respective Territories in the corresponding activities. Depending on the nature of given issues, the initiative is taken by ECLAC to generate interest within the Territories concerned.

9. With respect to the foregoing, ECLAC recognizes that among the more important benefits provided by the CDCC is its provision to the Non-Self-Governing Territories (referred to within CDCC circles as non-independent Caribbean countries) of access to the global forums that are provided by the United Nations, its agencies and programmes. The Territories are thus enabled to promote and advance their developmental objectives, including the access they enjoy to the global conferences of the United Nations. Particular mention might be made, in this regard, of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States constitutes a central element of the work of the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean. Currently, the associate members of the CDCC are preparing for participation in the International Meeting that will convene in Mauritius, in August-September 2004, to review the implementation of that Programme of Action. Significantly, some of them have been actively participating in the preparatory process of that International Meeting.

10. With specific reference to the resolutions mentioned in your letter, the following is submitted in respect of General Assembly resolutions 58/104 and 58/111. Activities relevant to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 58/104, paragraph 8, do not constitute central elements of the work programme of ECLAC.

11. As indicated above, measures of support are conducted in favour of the Non-Self-Governing Territories on an ongoing basis. The earlier reference to the Barbados Programme of Action proves to be quite relevant in the context of paragraphs 8 and 9 of resolution 58/104.

12. In that regard, the environmental sphere, the full range of activities developed in the context of the Programme of Action has been available to all members of the CDCC, including the associate members. By way of example, the experience of the British Virgin Islands was highlighted in the major document that was presented to the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Meeting to

Review the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action. That meeting convened in Trinidad and Tobago, from 6 to 10 October 2003. Reference is made to document LC/CAR/G.749 entitled, "Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in the Caribbean Subregion, 1994-2003". Among the areas highlighted in the context of the environment in relation to the British Virgin Islands, were: waste management; tourism; planning for development; the environment; disaster management; use of illicit drugs, drug trafficking and juvenile crime; and HIV/AIDS.

13. The British Virgin Islands was also the subject of a study on marine-based tourism, specifically the yachting sector. The principal objective of that study was to address weaknesses in the marine-based tourism subsector and to provide the bases for the development of national policies to promote sustainable marine-based tourism.

14. Another example of support is the provision, to officials and private sector representatives of, inter alia, the Non-Self-Governing Territories, of training in the use of the methodology developed by ECLAC for estimating the economic, social and environmental impacts of natural disasters. Post-disaster assessments, incorporating recommendations in respect of mitigation measures, have also been conducted by ECLAC in the Non-Self-Governing Territories that are members of the CDCC.

15. A final example of the type of support provided to Non-Self-Governing Territories is afforded by the delivery of two seminars to the political directorate, officials, and representatives of civil society in Montserrat, on:

(a) Protocol, diplomacy and ethics: preparing for more effective participation in the regional and wider international arena;

(b) The CARICOM Single Market and Economy: laying the foundations for enhanced productivity, competitiveness and profit.

B. Organization of Eastern Caribbean States[1]

16. The Non-Self-Governing Territories within the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) are Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat. All three are British Territories that together share common aims and objectives with the counterpart independent States members of the OECS as enshrined in the OECS Development Strategy and Charter. The membership of the non-independent Territories of the OECS varies and dates back as far as 18 June 1981 with the signing of the Treaty of Basseterre, when Montserrat became a full member upon the establishment of the organization. In November 1984 and in 1995, respectively, the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla became associate members of the OECS. Except for the British Virgin Islands,[2] which is an archipelago of 36 islands, the non-independent Territories of the OECS share a single common currency with other member States, the Eastern Caribbean dollar (EC$ 2.70 = US $1.00).

17. In keeping with the emerging trends within the global environment, the British overseas territories of the OECS, like the rest of the OECS countries, are faced with complex and diverse economic and social issues that are both threats and opportunities in the pursuance of their development objectives.

1. Related activities of the OECS secretariat with non-independent Territories

18. The related activities of the OECS with the non-independent Territories are largely circumscribed by the programme portfolio and policy instruments that define its operations. In the main, the non-independent Territories of the OECS benefit a number of the programmes and projects being implemented by the OECS secretariat. The present section outlines the key interventions that contribute to the socio-economic development of the non-independent Territories of the OECS. Specifically, the areas of focus are environmental and sustainable development, health, education, trade policy development, OECS Development Strategy and Charter, the Economic Union process and fund-raising.

(a) Environment and sustainable development

(i) Anguilla

Management Plan for the Marine Parks of Anguilla

19. Undertaken in 2001, the Management Plan was developed by a project managed by the Secretariat's Natural Resource Management Unit with funding from the United Kingdom Government Department for International Development (DfID). The key pertinent questions which formed the nucleus of the plan were: (i) what are the current impacts and threats to Anguilla's marine parks; (ii) what uses (activities) should be restricted in marine parks or any sub-zones, and which new areas should be set aside as marine parks, and why; and (iii) who should be responsible for that in managing the marine parks and monitoring habitats. The plan provides a summary statement of the various factors affecting the development and management of a marine parks system for Anguilla and includes the evaluation of relevant background information; management system planning; management implementation; and monitoring.

National Environmental Management Strategy and Action Plan

20. The National Environmental Management Strategy has been developed within the framework of the St. George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the OECS, as the document through which that Declaration will be implemented. The overall aim of the Anguilla National Environmental Management Strategy is the improvement in the quality of life of the people of Anguilla, by ensuring the sustainable use of available natural resources. In this regard, a specific goal has been set, to be achieved through the following objectives: (a) conduct of innovative public environmental education programmes; (b) integration of environmental concerns into national planning and development; (c) increase in public participation in decision-making; (d) update and enforcement of environmental laws; (e) development of a policy for, and system of, aquatic and terrestrial protected areas for biodiversity conservation; and (f) incorporation of collaborative planning and management into disaster mitigation and recovery.

Big Spring National Park

21. Financial and technical assistance was provided to the Government of Anguilla for this heritage site. Specifically assistance was provided for: (a) the construction of a safe footpath through the site; (b) building of a viewing platform; and

(c) construction of a visitor facility with amenities. Additionally, assistance was provided to undertake an environmental impact assessment of the site, basically to assess the potential impacts of the proposed facilities mentioned above, and also the formulation of a marketing and financial plan.

East End Pond Conservation Area

22. Financial and technical assistance was provided to the Government of Anguilla for this project site. Specifically, assistance was provided for: (a) landscaping; (b) establishment of a nature trail; (c) construction of a viewing platform and a boardwalk; and (d) fencing. Additionally, assistance was provided to undertake an environmental impact assessment of the site, basically to assess the potential impacts of the proposed facilities mentioned above; and the formulation of a marketing and financial plan.

(ii) Montserrat

Piper's Pond

23. Technical assistance was provided to the Government of Montserrat for the development of a Management Plan and Maintenance Manual for Piper's Pond. The Plan and Manual included key environmental values; guidelines for improvement of the pool; administration and operations; management objectives and activities; maintenance.

Assessment of damage to selected environmental assets in Montserrat following dome collapse on 12 July 2003

24. Technical assistance was provided in assessing damage to the environment following the dome collapse. Assignment identified damage (intensity and spatial extent) to sandy beaches, ghauts, forests and wetlands, and provided recommendations.

Development and implementation of the National Environmental Management Strategy

25. Technical and financial assistance in the development of the National Environmental Management Strategy for Montserrat was provided.

British Virgin Islands

26. Technical and financial assistance was provided for the development of the following manuals for the British Virgin Islands' Coastal Resources Information System:

"Metadatabase Manager's Manual": A database of information and a Geographic Information System-user interface that allows non-GIS specialists to visualize, interrogate and analyse important coastal resource information;

Scoping exercise on proposed developments in the Sea Cow and Brandywine Bays;

Assignment undertaken in response to a request from the Government of British Virgin Islands. Technical and financial assistance was provided. Reports were submitted to the Government of British Virgin Islands.

(b) Health: Pharmaceutical Procurement Service

27. The non-independent Territories have participated in the OECS Pharmaceutical Procurement Service subregional programme since its inception in 1986. In addition to substantial annual cost savings accrued from joint purchasing, the non-independent Territories have attained substantial benefits from pooled management of pharmaceuticals and related medical supplies. This is in keeping with the overall thrust of the Pharmaceutical Procurement Service of the secretariat, whose mission is to maximize the value of health-care services for the people of all OECS countries.

(c) Education: tertiary education programme

28. The project is geared towards increasing the standard and number of qualified human resources in the labour market by improving and expanding tertiary-level education capacity and assisting the reform of the sector in the region. Of the three non-independent Territories, the British Virgin Islands is the sole beneficiary of the project, where a sophisticated steering bridge simulator has been installed in the Centre for Marine Studies of the Lavity Stoutt Community College.

(d) Legal reform

29. Initiatives undertaken by the OECS Legal Unit of the secretariat generally cover all member States, including the three non-independent Territories of the OECS. The main subregional initiatives being spearheaded by the Legal Unit are judicial and legal reform, family law reform, legislative reform and harmonization, reform of intellectual property rights and the reform of trade legislation.

30. There are, however, instances where the Unit is required to respond to specific requests or address concerns relevant to specific member States. For instance in recent times, through the formal request of the Chief Minister of Montserrat, the OECS secretariat has provided technical support to the Government of Montserrat during its consultations with its Overseas Territories Office in respect of its possible involvement in the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and the Caribbean Court of Justice.

(e) Trade policy project

31. The overall purpose of the project is to bolster the capacity of all OECS member States (including the OECS non-independent Territories) in three main areas, namely:

- Facilitation of development and maintenance of an OECS international trade strategy
- Strengthening of the OECS capacity to meet obligations under regional and international trade agreements
- Strengthening of the OECS capacity to participate effectively in international trade negotiations.

(f) Export development

32. To date the Export Development Unit of the secretariat has provided limited technical support to the non-independent Territories on an as-needed basis, but it is envisaged that this will be expanded over time. The specific assistance given to date includes the following:

- Anguilla: providing technical assistance in support of the establishment of film and media services
- British Virgin Islands: providing technical assistance in support of the services sector and the establishment of the proposed trade promotion unit
- Montserrat: providing technical assistance to undertake a needs assessment in support of the manufacturing and agro-processing industries.

(g) OECS Development Strategy and Charter

33. The secretariat has been instrumental in guiding the process of integrative development through the design and formulation of an OECS Development Strategy (November 2000) and an OECS Development Charter (October 2002), both of which have been ratified and signed on to by the non-independent Territories. Enshrined within these documents are the strategic directions and plans of actions that will guide and define the paradigm within which the social and economic development occurs in the subregion. So far, the OECS secretariat has undertaken consultations with the Governments in Anguilla and Montserrat with a view to operationalizing these documents within the local environment. It is envisaged that a similar exercise will be undertaken with British Virgin Islands in the not-too-distant future.

(h) Economic Union project

34. The overall focus of the OECS Economic Union project is to deepen and strengthen regional governance on social and economic policies which will assist in greater stability and influence of member States in the global community. Despite the decision by Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands in January 2002 at the 35th meeting of the Authority not to participate in this initiative for the time being, Montserrat is involved in the Economic Union process. In keeping with the main components of the project, Montserrat's involvement includes the thrust towards realizing harmonization in the following areas:

- Free trade and free circulation goods
- Movement of natural persons and related social policies
- Movement of services and capital
- Monetary and fiscal policies
- External trade and external relations
- Legal, institutional and related governance arrangements
- Public information/education programmes, including consultations.

35. As part of the secretariat's recent constitutional review initiative among the OECS member States that is in keeping with the Economic Union process, special consideration will be given to the constitutional status of the non-independent Territories within the wider context.

(i) Fund-raising

36. Although this is not a common feature of its operations, in late 2003, the OECS High Commission[3] in Ottawa hosted a charity dinner in Ottawa in support of the people of Montserrat. Given the extensive damage and destruction, as well as the urgent international appeals for assistance to rehabilitate and reconstruct the island, which is being declared a disaster area, the OECS High Commission undertook to raise funds for the nationals of Montserrat to assist with the social and economic recovery process.

C. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

37. With regard to New Caledonia, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat wishes to advise that New Caledonia has been an observer at the Pacific Islands Forum since 1999. It is entitled to attend the annual meeting of Forum leaders (plenary session), ministerial and committee meetings of the Forum.

38. New Caledonia is a member of a number of regional organizations in the Pacific, such as the Pacific Community, Pacific Islands Development Programme, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and South Pacific Tourism Organization.

39. The Forum has a Forum Ministerial Committee on New Caledonia that visits New Caledonia periodically to review implementation of the Noumea Accord and reports to Pacific Islands Forum Leaders. The most recent visit of the Committee was in 2002 and there are indications that the Forum Ministerial Committee will visit New Caledonia again in 2005.

D. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

40. Through its research and analysis on the structural handicaps and issues of vulnerability faced by small island developing States, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) supports these countries in their efforts to gain increased recognition from the international community, in particular, in the multilateral trading system and in the sphere of development financing. In this work, UNCTAD takes into consideration all small island developing States with a population under 5 million, including non-independent island Territories, which generally face socio-economic problems and vulnerability problems that are similar in nature to the problems incurred by independent small island developing States. The main limitation that is commonly faced in incorporating non-independent island Territories in relevant cross-country analysis is the scarcity of available statistical data from the dependent island Territories.

41. UNCTAD takes into consideration the fact that the economic experience of some non-independent Territories (which have highly specialized economic activities such as tourism and offshore financial services) may be of interest to many

self-governing small island developing States. The advocacy of a special treatment of small island developing States in relevant international arenas, by casting light on the structural problems faced by small island developing States, can benefit non-independent island Territories, which also need a differentiated treatment in the perspective of their eventual accession to independence.

E. United Nations Development Programme

Assistance provided by UNDP and UNV to Non-Self-Governing Territories: Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Montserrat

42. Except for Montserrat, which has undergone a severe socio-economic crisis due to the volcano eruption of 2003, these Territories do not receive UNDP core funds for country programmes/projects owing to their status as net contributor countries. However, all of them receive assistance from UNDP through regional projects.

Regional projects benefiting Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Montserrat

43. **Comprehensive Disaster Management**. This project will reduce vulnerability to loss of life and property damage in the Caribbean in the long run and immediately realize and embed comprehensive disaster management as a viable process for disaster management through the development of a regional comprehensive disaster management strategy and building support for comprehensive disaster management at the national level. Consultations have been held in Anguilla and British Virgin Islands to integrate the comprehensive disaster management strategy in the planning system and legislation has to this end, been modified in both countries. The Territory of the British Virgin Islands also has vulnerability assessment and quantitative risk assessment exercises, and a draft mitigation policy has been developed. The three Territories have benefited from training in the comprehensive disaster management strategy as well as in programme planning and project management.

44. **Strengthening of the search and rescue capability in the Caribbean**. This project is designed to meet the need for an enhanced capacity for land-based search and rescue. The project will develop search and rescue capability at the national and regional levels, enhance the regional warehousing programme to support land-based search and rescue initiatives as well as strengthen the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) in this respect. It will seek to create the infrastructure for search and rescue through training of teams at the national level, the provision of specialized equipment and materials and the enhancement of the capacity of CDERA to lead and coordinate search and rescue emergencies in the region as part of its regional disaster response functions. The three Territories have received communications equipment and training in emergency telecommunications and warehouse management.

Overview of UNDP/UNV programming in Montserrat

45. **Project MON/98/001, "Disaster mitigation, capacity-building and institutional strengthening" in support of Montserrat's post-emergency resettlement programme.** Montserrat is a highly disaster-prone small island developing Territory. In the past 10 years it has suffered from major hurricanes

which have caused a great deal of destruction. Additionally, the island's active volcano has brought unsurpassed devastation to the country's population since 1995. In seeking to protect the lives and property of Montseratians, and to ensure preparedness, the Government of Montserrat has given top priority to disaster mitigation. Since 1998 UNDP has been providing funding and technical assistance, with funding also coming from DfID. Technical assistance has been provided in cooperation with the UNV Programme. UNDP allocated resources in 2003 through this project.

46. The Montserrat Emergency Department which benefited from the project will now be able to provide guidance on disaster vulnerability to development planners and private sector initiatives in the coming years. Technical assistance and transfer of know-how have helped a number of key Ministries such as agriculture, communication, works and health to strengthen capacity to serve Montserrat's population. The most vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, have also benefited as a result of improvements in health, water, roads, housing, security infrastructure, and education facilities. The expected outcomes of this project are: (i) incorporated disaster management prevention and mitigation into design and development of the new communities in the safe zone; (ii) ensured more efficient implementation of the country's resettlement programme for the on-island and returning displaced Montseratians through alleviation of technical and institutional bottlenecks in a range of government departments.

47. There are five United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) who currently provide technical support to Montserrat under project MON/98/001 in disaster mitigation, capacity-building and institutional strengthening.

48. An architect works with the Public Works department and supports work on infrastructural development for the Island. Work has been completed on the Community Care Center, Assisted Living Quarters and a new Police Headquarters. Work is ongoing to complete the hospital morgue. There is also a GIS specialist who works with the physical planning as well as the department of land and survey. This support has been aimed at development of various databases and computerization of Montserrat's Cadastre and Land Registry systems through use of GIS techniques. Training is also provided to staff. Modification and changes of land parcel boundaries has been ongoing. GIS data/services have been rendered to various departments in Montserrat for supporting projects in resource planning, mapping and development. There is a civil engineer whose services are being provided in the reconstruction of asphalt/concrete roads and drainages, construction of embarkement-soil reinforcement using geotextile, adjacent to the existing roads, and refurbishment of the Carr's Bay Bridge. Work has also been carried out on construction of a helicopter pad at the Volcano Observatory, as well as a road adjacent to the hospital mortuary.

49. The other two UNVs are an occupational therapist and a physiotherapist. The occupational therapist continues to provide rehabilitation services to the elderly and the disabled. Efforts have focused on helping in assessing and ordering durable medical equipment for the home-care agency and nursing home, and helping the establishment of Special Olympics and training competition. Assistance was also given in the relocation of seniors from the volcano shelters into the newly constructed warden-supported apartments. Advice has also been provided to handicapped accessibility during construction, assessing candidates as potential

apartment residents as well as providing ongoing therapy services and weekly activities for the elderly at the Community Centre. Therapy services are also being provided to the hospital, nursing homes and homes for the elderly. Since April 2003 the physiotherapist has been providing therapy to patients at the hospital, working closely with the Chief Medical Officer of Health as well as with the occupational therapist.

F. United Nations Children's Fund

50. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has provided assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean during the period 2003/04. The UNICEF Caribbean Area Office covers three such Territories: Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the British Virgin Islands.

Montserrat

- Training for teachers in training parenting
- 35,000 masks as emergency response to volcanic eruption
- Global Movement for Children launch
- Launch of 2003-2007 programme of cooperation
- HIV/AIDS education and prevention programmes.

Turks and Caicos Islands

- Health and family life education training materials and training
- National consultation on children's rights
- HIV/AIDS education and prevention programmes with National HIV/AIDS Committee and the Red Cross
- Assessment of the attitudes and practices of adolescents and youth in relation to HIV/AIDS risk.

British Virgin Islands

- HIV/AIDS education: peer education in collaboration with the Red Cross
- Consultation on child abuse-child protection
- Survey: adolescents and youth on HIV/AIDS.

51. During the UNICEF programmatic cycle 2003-2007, UNICEF will continue to support these countries, but especially in the following priority areas:

- Training of trainers in health and family life education policy
- Public education on children's rights
- Public education on adolescents' right to participation
- Strengthening of mechanisms for the monitoring of children's rights
- Ensuring that all children have access to an integrated range of early childhood services

- Ensuring that all children, especially those with disabilities and those affected or infected with HIV/AIDS are integrated.

G. International Labour Office

52. The International Labour Office is involved in 12 of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, namely, American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Falklands (Malvinas), Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, St. Helena, Tokelau, and the United States Virgin Islands. Its efforts concern, in particular, its constitutional obligations under article 35 of its Constitution, which requires of member States that Conventions which they have ratified be applied to the non-metropolitan Territories for whose international relations they are responsible. The reports submitted by member States in compliance with that article of the Constitution are submitted to the ILO's Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations each year, which examines those reports and comments on them as applicable.

H. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Western Sahara

53. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights does not have any specific activity as such in relation to Western Sahara. However, the Office supports the Moroccan Information, Documentation and Training Centre, which has organized training sessions that are attended by Sahrawi journalists and human rights defenders.

54. In 2003, several communications were addressed by mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights to the Moroccan authorities on behalf of Saharwi human rights defenders.

I. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

55. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provides assistance to small island developing States following the 1999 Special Ministerial Conference on Agriculture in SIDS, which was held at FAO headquarters. FAO work on the development challenges faced by small island developing States is relevant to most Non-Self-Governing Territories. The organization's assistance to small island developing States has focused principally on support for sustainable development policies and practices in agriculture, rural development, forestry, fisheries and food security. FAO assistance is facilitated by its field offices, including the Subregional Office for the Caribbean, located in Barbados, and the Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, located in Samoa.

56. FAO participated in the recent Inter-Regional Conference of Small Island Developing States (Bahamas, 26-30 January 2004) and made available to that meeting several key documents, which underline economic and social issues of importance to small island developing States: "FAO and SIDS: challenges and emerging issues in agriculture, forestry and fisheries" and "Special ministerial conference on agriculture in small island developing States (SIDS), Rome, Italy,

12 March 1999: report and background documents". The latter includes a plan of action for ensuring sustainable management of land, water and forest resources and environmental protection of SIDS. FAO will also lead a panel on trade and SIDS at the twelfth session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (April 2004). In 2005, FAO will convene a SIDS Conference. Further information on FAO SIDS-related activities has been and will be reported on in reports to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council dealing specifically with this issue.

57. In addition, Territories are invited, in some instances and at their own expense, to participate in FAO subregional workshops, for example in the area of fisheries. Some of the Territories are also endowed with forest resources. In the framework of the forest resources assessment, FAO has prepared and published reliable information on their forest resources. Under the International Food Data System (INFOODS), FAO has food-composition-related activities in New Caledonia.

J. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Turks and Caicos Islands

58. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UNDP have been supporting small and medium-sized enterprise development in the Turks and Caicos Islands since July 2000. The project aims at employment- and income-generation among the Belonger population with the final objective of curbing migration from the lesser-developed islands to Grant Turk and Providencials.

59. A Small Enterprise Development Centre (SEDC) has been established within TCInvest to provide business assistance adapted to the needs of local entrepreneurs. The SEDC services, which have been developed with UNIDO assistance, include entrepreneurship training courses, short-term managerial and technical training and seminars, as well as business advisory and extension services. One hundred and forty enterprises have been started up or expanded and 77 new jobs were created. 55 per cent of the beneficiaries were women.

60. Future activities will concentrate on the improvement of the policy and regulatory environment for small enterprise development. In this context, a survey was conducted to identify the major constraints faced by local entrepreneurs.

Notes

[1] Organization of Eastern Caribbean States paper entitled "Non-Self-Governing Territories within the OECS region, Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Montserrat, with specific focus on their economic and social issues and related activities of the OECS secretariat".

[2] The official currency of the British Virgin Islands is United States dollars.

[3] The OECS High Commission falls under the purview of the Director General of the OECS Secretariat.